

through regional planning, technical assistance, and funding of projects aimed at encouraging economic prosperity.

This Northern Border Regional Commission is modeled after the very successful Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) approach, an idea conceived by Chairman OBERSTAR, over 40 years ago.

Simply put, the numbers speak for themselves. Since its creation, the ARC has reduced the number of distressed counties in its region from 219 to 100, cut the poverty rate from 31 percent to 15 percent, and helped 1,400 businesses create 26,000 new jobs. I welcome the creation of similar Commissions with this kind of proven track record.

The Northern Border Regional Commission not only will extend benefits to economically distressed counties in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, but will also allow Upstate New York counties like Oneida, Herkimer, Cayuga, and Seneca to enjoy the same benefits their neighboring counties in the Southern Tier enjoy under the Appalachian Regional Commission.

We need to act now to ensure that every American has access to job training, employment-related education, and high-tech infrastructure, so that we can retain and grow our global competitive edge. And I am confident the Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development Act will help us achieve that end.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation which will help create parity for economically anemic regions across the country.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3246, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING THE AUTHORITIES OF THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3527) to extend for two months the authorities of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3527

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF OPIC PROGRAMS.

Section 235(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2195(a)(2)) is amended by striking "September 30, 2007" and inserting "November 30, 2007".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3527.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

This House recently approved legislation that would reauthorize the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for an additional 4 years. The bill would ensure that OPIC continues its critical mission of supporting private investment to accomplish important public sector goals in the developing world, while, at the same time, enhancing OPIC's transparency and accountability.

The Senate is considering similar legislation, Mr. Speaker, and the Foreign Affairs Committee looks forward to working with that body so that we can send the bill to the President for his signature.

While the Senate considers this legislation, OPIC's current authority expires at the end of this month. In order to provide the Senate with additional time to take up this legislation and ensure that the corporation continues its critical work, my friend and colleague, the good chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. SHERMAN from California, has crafted this proposed bill that provides OPIC with the authority to operate for an additional 2 months beyond September 30, 2007.

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I do want to commend our distinguished chairman of the committee, Mr. LANTOS; and our senior ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support and leadership in bringing this legislation to the floor. I recommend this legislation for passage, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of the bill, H.R. 3527, a bill that would extend the authorization of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation until November 30 of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, on July 23, as my good friend Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA just said, the House passed H.R. 2798, a bill to reauthorize OPIC through September 30 of 2011. That measure had previously been favorably reported by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs by a vote of 26-5, totally bipartisan. To date, how-

ever, the other body has not acted, requiring us to take this stop-gap measure to continue the authorization for this legislation. We hope they act soon on the Senate side so that the President can be sent a bipartisan bill that can be signed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3527.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AUTHORIZING THE PEACE CORPS TO PROVIDE SEPARATION PAY FOR HOST COUNTRY RESIDENT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTORS

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3528) to provide authority to the Peace Corps to provide separation pay for host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3528

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AUTHORIZATION FOR PEACE CORPS TO PROVIDE SEPARATION PAY FOR HOST COUNTRY RESIDENT PERSONAL SERVICES CONTRACTORS OF THE PEACE CORPS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund for the Peace Corps to provide separation pay for host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps.

(b) FUNDING.—The Director of the Peace Corps may deposit in the fund established under subsection (a)—

(1) amounts previously obligated and not canceled to provide the separation pay described in such subsection; and

(2) amounts obligated for fiscal years after fiscal year 2006 for current and future costs of providing such separation pay.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Beginning in fiscal year 2007, amounts deposited in the fund established under subsection (a) shall be available without fiscal year limitation for severance, retirement, or other separation payments to host country resident personal services contractors of the Peace Corps in countries where such payments are legally authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA)